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The New Face of EU Security Policies?

Analyzing the Normative Patterns of EU Non-Proliferation Policies in the Southern Mediterranean

ABSTRACT In recent years, the European Union (EU) has substantially intensified its non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean. Although the analysis of these policies shows that the Union comes close to what the literature suggests is an ideal type normative power, this interpretation in itself is at odds with other security policies in the southern Mediterranean and with non-proliferation policies outside the region, most notably in Iran. Therefore, this article examines the causes and implications of this inconsistency, and argues that it can be problematic to characterise the EU as a normative power in a geographically and thematically limited issue area.

Introduction

Exactly 15 years passed between the adoption of the 1995 Barcelona Declaration and the decision to organise, for the very first time, a formal conference on one of the Declaration's key security provisions, namely a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Although the decision was taken by consensus at the 2010 review conference of the key treaty in the field, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, holding such a conference has proven to be difficult.¹ Given the apparently slow progress in this area, analyses of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) tended in the initial instance to criticise the lack of EU action in support of WMD non-proliferation in the southern Mediterranean area (see Biscop, 2003: 188).² Even with the development of the so-called European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) on the eve of the 2004 EU enlargement, a policy which was regarded as targeting security issues in the EU's periphery more specifically, pundits' assessments have hardly changed (Dokos, 2008: 127). Likewise, the launch of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in 2008 has not brought about a stronger non-proliferation dimension in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

However, developments in EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean in recent years suggest that a new appraisal of the situation would be both timely and beneficial

to the field. As will be argued in this article, the EU has substantially intensified its non-proliferation activities in the region in the last ten years, in particular in those areas not covered by the formal geographical policy frameworks of the EMP, ENP and UfM. The final breakthrough came with the new Instrument for Stability (2007-2012), a financial tool to finance, *inter alia*, long-term projects that address transregional and global threats. At first glance, this development is hardly surprising, since it appears to reflect what has been referred to as a “‘securitization’ dynamic’ in Euro-Mediterranean relations (Kausch & Youngs, 2009: 968), whereby Mediterranean policies are increasingly driven by threat perceptions in the European Union. However, a closer examination of EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean reveals major differences in other security areas such as counter-terrorism. Therefore, the question remains as to which kind of security actor the EU is in the field of non-proliferation.

In this article, it will be argued that the EU closely approximates what has recently been termed the ideal type of normative power (De Zutter, 2010; Forsberg, 2011). In other words, whereas the EU’s policies in fields such as counter-terrorism or migration would seem to encourage us to question ‘the degree to which it really wishes to act as a normative power’ (Joffé, 2008: 168), EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean do appear to reinforce the normative power perspective of the EU. However, this raises broader questions about the causes and implications of the inconsistency between the EU’s normative approach to non-proliferation and other security policies in the southern Mediterranean and beyond. More specifically, this undermines the conceptual utility of the emerging ideal type approach to normative power Europe (NPE), in particular in geographically and thematically limited issue areas such as non-proliferation of WMD in the southern Mediterranean.

Based on a brief conceptual framework on NPE as an ideal type, the main part of this article will examine in detail the normative patterns of EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean in the last ten years. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the results and their implications. Finally, more general conclusions will be drawn about NPE and the EU as a security actor.

Conceptual Operationalisation: Normative Power Europe as an Ideal Type

In the early years of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, EU policies towards its southern partners were regarded as different from the *realpolitik* of the traditional foreign policies of

nation states. As Kausch and Youngs (2009: 963) suggest, ‘The EMP was predicated on joint commitments to cooperative security, region-building, burden-sharing, cultural proximity, economic support and political modernization’. This perceived distinctiveness of Euro-Mediterranean relations has attracted a large body of literature, particularly examining the extent to which the EU was actually acting as a normative power in the region, by diffusing shared norms of good governance, economic development and comprehensive security in a cooperative way. In contrast to expectations, the large majority of analyses actually conclude that the EU’s policies in the region can hardly be characterised as a normative power approach (see Bicchi, 2006; Pace et al., 2009). In the specific sphere of political and security issues, it has been lamented that, in practice, the ‘comprehensive and cooperative approach’ to security (Biscop, 2003: 184-6) has been narrowed down to what has been called a “‘surveillance and control” approach to security’ (Pace, 2010: 432). According to this approach, policies are largely informed by real or perceived EU-centred security concerns, above all Islamist terrorism and migration from the southern Mediterranean to Europe. Furthermore, they dominate Euro-Mediterranean relations to the detriment of a more cooperative approach based on a broader normative agenda (see, for example, Joffé, 2008; Kausch & Youngs, 2009; Pace, 2010; Wolff, 2009).

It is surprising, however, that one of the dominant issues of the global security agenda in the last decade has been neglected in these analyses: the proliferation of WMD. Yet, given the widespread criticism of the EU’s security approach in the Euro-Mediterranean area, the examination of EU policies in this particular field could offer new insights into the extent to which the EU acts as a normative power in the region. The initial problem associated with such an analysis is the lack of conceptual precision regarding the NPE concept, which has provoked a lively debate about its strengths and weaknesses during the last ten years (see Forsberg, 2011: 1186-90). Scholars have actually disagreed about the most fundamental elements of the concept: is it a prescriptive or descriptive concept? Which norms does a normative power diffuse? Which means does it use? In recent years, the literature on NPE as an ideal type has offered useful answers. According to this approach, NPE is neither a normative description of the EU as it is nor an ideal to be followed by the EU, but an analytical ideal type in a Weberian sense (Forsberg, 2011; De Zutter, 2010). For the purposes of this article, the criteria for such an ideal-type normative power can be streamlined into two groups: (1) the normative basis and (2) normative practice of NPE. In a sense, this refers to what NPE is and what it does. Together with the potential impact of normative power, this categorisation largely resembles Manner’s ‘tripartite analytical methods’ based on the

analysis of the 'EU's principles, actions and impact' (Manners, 2008: 55; see Whitman, 2011).

The first group of criteria refers to the EU's normative identity and interests (see Forsberg, 2011: 1192-3). Although both concepts are debatable, they help to define more precisely what is meant by an ideal type normative power. The first concept states that certain norms and rules constitute a normative power, e.g. the treaty-based legal order in the case of the EU. The latter concept, normative interests, refers to the generally accepted distinction between a normative power's broader inclusionist interests aimed at 'achieving mutually beneficial goals' in third countries (Pace, 2010: 433) and the more instrumental and exclusionist interests of other types of powers. This distinction echoes growing ethical considerations about what is 'doing good' in European foreign policy, especially in the context of ethical power Europe. Although the concept of ethical power is still not as well developed as the NPE concept and focuses primarily on the intention and purpose behind EU actions (see Aggestam, 2008: 3-4), bringing in an ethical dimension is an important contribution to the understanding of normative power Europe as an ideal type (see De Zutter, 2010).

The second group of criteria of an ideal type normative power includes the actual practice of norm diffusion. In this respect, the preliminary criterion is that the normative power itself behaves according to certain norms and rules that have been constructed as being universal and, thus, ethically 'good'. These include, for example, international law or principles of multilateralism (see Forsberg, 2011: 1193-4). In the realm of WMD, i.e. nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, these norms and rules broadly prohibit, and with variations according to weapon type, the proliferation of these weapons or of weapon-related technologies, whilst foreseeing complete disarmament. At the same time, they permit the development and use of civilian nuclear, chemical and biological technologies under international controls, including controls for related exports. Crucially, a normative power uses what Forsberg (2011: 1194) calls 'normative means of power' to diffuse such norms and rules. Although De Zutter (2010: 1114) has well noted that '[i]nstruments do not define a normative power', most studies of NPE come conceptually closer to her 'ethical ideal-type of cosmopolitan normative power', wherein non-confrontational and non-coercive instruments do play a defining role due to ethical considerations. If we return to Forsberg's study, these instruments or mechanisms which are typical of a normative power can be defined as follows: 'persuading others' in political dialogues; 'invoking norms' that have been agreed to by two parties in common agreements; 'shaping the discourse of what is normal'; and leading by 'the power of example' (Forsberg, 2011: 1196-8). In this regard, normative power is more specifically

concerned with mechanisms of norm diffusion, i.e. this article's empirical focus, than the broader, though interrelated concept of civilian power, which 'strive[s] to "civilize" (...) relations between states along the lines of their own, democratic, domestic politics' (Mauil, 2005: 779-80).

A separate question would explore whether the use of these mechanisms of norm diffusion also 'achieves normative ends' (Forsberg, 2011: 1194). At a minimum, this means that 'the EU should "do least harm" in world politics' (Manners, 2008: 59). In terms of effectiveness, however, this criterion is rather limited. It may be much more illuminating to examine how far the EU achieves tangible results when it comes to the measurable acceptance of norms by third parties. The key problem here is that the diffusion of norms tends to be a long-term process. Therefore, it is difficult to trace real impact in the initial phases of policy framing and implementation, as for instance in the case of the EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean. In other words, the actual effectiveness of normative power Europe cannot yet be discerned in this case. In the short term, it is more practical, and ultimately more fruitful, to begin by analysing the normative basis and practice of the EU and then to offer a critical interpretation of the implications of these results by considering them alongside broader perspectives.

The Normative Basis of EU Non-Proliferation Policies

As has been suggested already, it is notoriously difficult to pin down an actor's 'normative identity'. Nonetheless, the systematic examination of relevant documents reveals that the EU's policies are firmly based upon the international non-proliferation rules and norms established in multilateral agreements. According to Council Common Position 2003/805/CFSP the major agreements, which are also relevant for the southern Mediterranean, include: the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention; the Chemical Weapons Convention; the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation; the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; and the Additional Safeguard Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency which permits inspectors to undertake intrusive inspections of nuclear installations (see Santoro, 2011). Crucially, the EU's key documents in the field, in particular the 2003 WMD Strategy and the 2008 New Lines of Action which updated the former, demonstrate that these international treaties and institutions form the centrepiece of the EU's policies. According to the WMD

Strategy, ‘The EU is committed to the multilateral treaty system, which provides the legal and normative basis for all non-proliferation efforts’ (Council of the European Union, 2003: 6). This commitment to multilateralism and non-proliferation norms and rules in the form of treaties and institutions parallels similar commitments in the strategic documents of the EU’s Mediterranean policies, from the Barcelona Declaration to the final declaration of the 2008 UfM ministerial conference. In fact, the adherence of all Mediterranean partner countries to the existing non-proliferation agreements can be seen, together with the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, as the two overarching objectives of the EU’s non-proliferation policy in the region. Furthermore, concrete policy measures in the form of Council Decisions or, prior to the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, Joint Actions, clearly reflect this normative identity based on international non-proliferation norms and institutions. To illustrate this, we need only consider that of the 27 Joint Actions and Council Decisions adopted to date in the field of non-proliferation, 22 address specifically multilateral non-proliferation institutions. These usually involve the financing of specific measures to increase the membership in these institutions or to strengthen the institutions’ control mechanisms (see Council, 2012). As the most recent Council Decision on non-proliferation measures in the Middle East makes clear: ‘In the Union’s view, practical steps should, inter alia, promote universal adherence to, and compliance with, all multilateral agreements and instruments in the field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament’ (Council of the European Union, 2012: 70). In short, it seems reasonable to argue that the EU has a normative identity based on multilateralism and international norms and rules in the field of non-proliferation.

However, the analysis of strategic documents is inconclusive concerning the question if the EU pursues inclusionist or exclusionist interests. The WMD Strategy states, for instance, that ‘Proliferation of WMD is a global threat, which requires a global approach. However, as security in Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean, we should pay particular attention to the issue of proliferation in the Mediterranean area’ (Council of the European Union, 2003: 7). The New Lines of Actions are even more outspoken when they stipulate that ‘We must accord the highest priority to protecting European citizens and our friends and allies against the existing and growing risk presented by the proliferation of such weapons’ (Council of the European Union, 2008: 3). However, these rhetorical manifestations may not necessarily represent the dominant type of interest that guides the EU’s non-proliferation policies. Therefore, the rhetoric should be compared with the patterns of EU non-proliferation policies. In other words, if EU policies are informed by narrower instrumental interests which are exclusively concerned with the EU’s own security and

stability, and not by more inclusionist interests that are pursued in accordance with the security concerns of third parties, the policies should be strongest where the EU's instrumental interests are most affected.

In order to examine this claim, it is necessary first to outline the EU's potential security concerns in the southern Mediterranean. Classical military threat assessments take into consideration both the WMD capabilities of actors as well as their actual intent to use them against Europe.³ Such an assessment based on open sources is not immediately worrisome: 'The proliferation threat against European countries should be conceived of as a mid- to long-term threat' (Dokos, 2008: 92; see Dokos, 2008: 73-89). Nevertheless, three areas of security concern remain: first, the existing WMD arsenals could be used against European forces deployed in the region. Second, WMD and dual-use capabilities,⁴ even without the direct intention of using them, represents a major destabilizing risk, from the accidental use of WMD, e.g. in crisis situations, to the transfer of WMD related knowledge to terrorist organisations operating in Europe. Third, the failure to ratify key treaties in the field of non-proliferation weakens control over the development of WMD and undermines the fragile stability in the EU's neighbourhood. Accordingly, the southern Mediterranean countries can be divided into three groups of concern: (a) states of high concern that are believed to possess WMD and that have ratified only a very few major non-proliferation agreements; (b) states of medium concern that have ratified few treaties and/or have dual-use capabilities; and (c) states of low concern that do not possess any relevant capabilities and that have ratified almost all relevant agreements.

The countries of the heartland of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Egypt, Israel and Syria, undoubtedly belong to group (a). Israel is by far the most capable of all southern Mediterranean countries, in particular due its supposed nuclear arsenal of up to 200 warheads. The other two regional actors, Egypt and, in particular, Syria have substantial, yet unspecified capabilities in the area of chemical weapons. In fact, at the time of writing during the current uprising in Syria, the security and safety of the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal is a major source of concern in the region. In the turmoil of war, for example, these weapons could be launched accidentally or end up in the hands of terrorist organisations. Apart from their WMD capabilities, Egypt, Israel and Syria have also a very low degree of integration in the international non-proliferation institutions. Egypt and Syria are non-nuclear-weapon state members of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but otherwise none of the major non-proliferation treaties have been ratified. Israel, for its part, has ratified none of these treaties. Group (b) consists of Algeria, Lebanon and Libya. Algeria is currently

developing a nuclear energy programme and is believed to be engaged in low-key biotechnology research. It has still not ratified, nor has Lebanon, all relevant agreements. Libya is a special case. In the past, Libya had been a major proliferation concern, but in 2003 the regime in Tripoli announced the dismantlement of all its WMD activities and joined all relevant non-proliferation agreements. At that time, however, the EU non-proliferation policy was still in its fledgling stages and played, at best, an indirect role (see Bowen, 2006: 47-69). During the uprising against Qadhafi, concerns emerged again regarding the still existent chemical weapons in Libya, but to a large extent they turned out to be unfounded and the few weapons that were left after Qadhafi's fall were quickly put under the control of the responsible international organisation, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (see Zanders, 2011). Finally, group (c) comprises Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Despite growing interest in nuclear energy in the wake of the nuclear renaissance in the region, especially in Jordan, these countries have no significant WMD-related activities ongoing and are member states in good standing of virtually all relevant non-proliferation agreements.

However, in contrast to what narrow instrumental security interests would suggest, the EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean have not focused on countries of high concern, either rhetorically or in practice. On the contrary, the geographical priority has been the countries of least or medium concern: Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and, to a lesser extent Jordan and Lebanon. Although all countries in the southern Mediterranean have been the object of at least a few EU non-proliferation actions, as can be seen in Table 1, only the latter two have received substantial support in terms of export control assistance. This has come in the form of projects in the framework of Joint Actions in the field of non-proliferation or as part of the network of Centres of Excellence that have been set up in various countries to mitigate chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks. Moreover, during the uprising against Qadhafi in Libya and the current revolt against Assad in Syria, the EU has not been involved in the efforts to secure, if necessary by military means, the chemical weapons in these countries, even though these have probably been the most pressing WMD concerns in the southern Mediterranean. This shows how, in practice, instrumental security interests have been largely absent from the EU's non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean. The EU rather focuses on non-confrontational activities in countries of medium and low concern.

Normative Practice and EU Non-Proliferation Policies

The EU's normative identity and interests are matched by the EU's own actions accordingly. Most notably, all EU member states have ratified or are members of all major non-proliferation organisations and agreements (see Kienzle & Vestergaard, 2012: 375). Furthermore, the EU has taken numerous measures to increase the membership of these organisations and treaties and to strengthen the enforcement of their norms and rules (see Council, 2012). At the same time, the EU and its member states have incorporated internationally established norms and regulations into their own legislation, for example concerning the control of the export of relevant items and technologies. Finally, and decisively for the EU's non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean, the Union has made exclusive use of almost all existing normative mechanisms in its non-proliferation policies.⁵ The exception to this is that the leading by 'the power of example' approach has remained a largely academic exercise, as is evidenced by the example of the European Atomic Energy Community Treaty inspiring ideas of similar arrangements in the Middle East (see Mallard, 2008).

Political Dialogue

The first normative mechanisms that the EU has implemented are different forms of political dialogue. In this regard, it is necessary to distinguish between one-way communications of the EU to Mediterranean third countries; bilateral dialogues between the EU and a single Mediterranean third country; and Euro-Mediterranean multilateral dialogues. One-way communication, which usually takes the form of a Demarche or a Declaration on behalf of the EU and urges or supports the accession to international non-proliferation regimes respectively, has been used in the case of all Mediterranean third countries. In the case of bilateral dialogues, non-proliferation issues such as non-proliferation institutions, expert controls and multilateral nuclear fuel arrangements have been discussed in both specific political dialogue forums, most notably with Egypt and Israel, and in the framework of the Association Committees of the ENP, in particular with the more advanced Mediterranean partner countries, Morocco, Tunisia, Israel and Jordan. Multilateral dialogues on non-proliferation issues, for their part, have been on hold, at least within the framework of regular meetings of senior officials of the EMP. Nevertheless, outside the framework of Euro-Mediterranean relations, the EU has been able to finance numerous workshops and seminars run by international governmental and intergovernmental organisations, in which government

officials and members of civil society from southern Mediterranean partner countries participated. The workshops have largely been financed through Council Decisions or, prior to the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, Joint Actions, and have aimed at diverse issues such as implementing export controls to prevent the illicit export of WMD-related items or the ratification of relevant agreements.

From a regional perspective, the key measures have been conferences and workshops that have focused specifically on the region of the southern Mediterranean. Such conferences have been held on the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1540, which obliges all UN members to take appropriate measures to prevent WMD proliferation whilst encouraging them to ratify the relevant agreements. After years of lobbying partner countries, the EU has also been able to convene a series of three seminars on broader issues relating to non-proliferation and disarmament in the Middle East. The first one was an informal seminar held in Paris in 2008. The next event, held in Brussels in 2011, was more formal and was of particular significance since it involved the active participation of partner countries in the southern Mediterranean and the Middle East, including both Israel and Iran (see Müller, 2011: 21-3). The main objective of this event was to foster open discussions about the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East as part of the previously mentioned decision in 2010 to hold a formal conference on that topic amongst the states of the region. A similar track-2 event took place under Council Decision 2012/422/CFSP in November 2012 and was flanked by a series of background papers and a dedicated website. In recent years, these regional conferences and seminars have been complemented by the establishment of networks of relevant professionals from all southern Mediterranean partner countries, in particular EpiSouth, which operates in the area of bio-safety and bio-security, and Euromed Police II and III, which operate in the area of law enforcement (see Table 1). The added value of these regional initiatives has been that they have consistently kept open the communication channels on non-proliferation and disarmament between southern Mediterranean countries. These are in line with a persuasion based approach, which emphasises principled debates and the power of the argument. This is certainly an important achievement in a region where security related debates are especially difficult to sustain (see Heller, 2000: 166).

The Non-Proliferation Clause

The second group of mechanisms are mainly concerned with the inclusion of non-proliferation provisions in agreements with southern Mediterranean countries. These

provisions can, in basic terms, be ‘invoked by one party when they are violated by another’ (Forsberg, 2011: 1197). The EU’s non-proliferation provisions are based on a specific clause, applicable since 2003, which it is stipulated must be included in the EU’s mixed agreements with third countries. The clause itself consists of two parts: the first is an essential component which refers back to existing obligations under international agreements and is binding for the contracting parties; the other is a largely declaratory element, which promotes the ratification of non-proliferation agreements in general (see Grip, 2009). So far, all ENP Action Plans that have been signed with individual partner countries and form the backbone of the EU’s neighbourhood policy include substantial provisions on non-proliferation that, to a certain extent, represent the specific non-proliferation clause (see Table 1). Although they vary slightly from country to country, especially in the case of Israel, and to a lesser extent Egypt,⁶ the plans include broad commitments, which include the following: an agreement to comply with, or to accede to, existing international agreements; to cooperate in the area of export control and security border management in order to prevent illicit trade in WMD-related goods; and to promote the non-proliferation agenda of the Barcelona Declaration. Although it would be easy to criticise these non-proliferation provisions as watered down versions of the non-proliferation clause, the fact that the EU has managed to include such provisions into documents that do not legally require them is a major accomplishment, especially given the historical and geographical context of the Middle East. Furthermore, they underline the EU’s non-coercive approach in general.

The non-proliferation provision that has received most attention from analysts is the non-proliferation clause that was included in the 2004 EU-Syria Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement, despite the fact that this agreement has still not entered into force.⁷ First of all, the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement with Syria, together with the Association Agreement with Libya, which is still to be negotiated, is the only Euro-Mediterranean agreement that must include the full non-proliferation clause, since all other mixed agreements with Euro-Mediterranean third countries were signed and ratified before the entry into force of the clause.⁸ Second, Syria is a major proliferation concern in the Middle East, as has already been suggested. However, the inclusion of the non-proliferation clause in the negotiation with Syria initially caused a serious debate amongst those who favoured a hard-line approach that would force Syria to accept both parts of the clause as essential elements and those who feared that the negotiation of a non-proliferation clause at a relatively late stage would place the whole Association Agreement in danger (see Elleman et al., 2012: 15-6; Grip, 2009: 7). Ultimately, the EU agreed (with only minor modifications) upon the

minimum interpretation of the non-proliferation clause, wherein the first part remains essential and the second one non-essential. In this way, the EU maintained its normative commitment to international non-proliferation treaties and organisations, though without a dominant coercive element.

From Outreach Projects to the Centres of Excellence

The EU's outreach and support activities, which constitute the third group of mechanisms, have become a key element of the EU's non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean. The oldest projects, stemming from a 2005 Pilot Project in this area, are carried out by the German Federal Office of Economics and Export Control (BAFA) in co-ordination with the European Commission and, since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the European External Action Service. In total, the BAFA has executed three projects, the 2005 Pilot Project and the 2008 and 2011 Long-Term Projects, with a total budget of more than €11m.⁹ Generally, these projects aim at improving the controls, particularly of dual-use items, in third countries. The projects essentially have two main purposes: on the one hand, third countries potentially get better access to trade in high technology sectors, which is a major incentive for many of them, and, on the other hand, the security risk of the diversion of dual-use items and technologies for illegitimate goals is lowered. In a sense, the EU offers third countries the opportunity to exploit its own, internationally established legal and normative framework in the field of dual-use items and technologies in exchange for easier access to sensitive high technologies. Since outreach activities depend both upon existing contractual relationships with partner countries and on political willingness to accept the EU's outreach offers, the activities have been limited to a few advanced southern Mediterranean countries of low proliferation concern, in particular Morocco and Tunisia.

The implementation of the projects has not been free of problems. In the case of Tunisia, for example, personnel changes during the Arab Spring led, for a limited period, to the break-up of the relationship with Tunisia. This resulted in the loss of institutional memory in the sense of collective knowledge acquired during previous outreach activities by the Tunisian administration. In the case of Morocco, this was not an issue, but in the early stages of the outreach activities in this country, the unclear relationship between BAFA's projects and similar outreach projects by the US government programme EXBS lead to confusion regarding the exact distribution of tasks. This problem was solved, however, through an agreement between BAFA, EXBS and the Moroccan authorities. Finally, it should be pointed

out the BAFA projects have lacked a marked regional dimension in the southern Mediterranean. Nevertheless, from the perspective of normative power, the BAFA outreach projects have consistently remained a cooperative norm export exercise in line with international standards established, for example, in UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Furthermore, they have been by and large technical projects. As such, they did not prop up dictatorial regimes in the southern Mediterranean before the Arab Spring, as other security related EU policies arguably did.

At the same time as the BAFA projects, the EU implemented other, though not directly linked, outreach activities in the form of Joint Actions and Council Decisions in support of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization. These included, in particular, Joint Action 2005/574/CFSP, 2006/418/CFSP, 2008/314/CFSP and 2008/588/CFSP as well as Council Decision 2010/585/CFSP (see Table 1). These Joint Actions had a substantial overall budget of more than €30m and funded different, highly technical and generally non-intrusive projects such as the ‘Strengthening of States’ Capabilities for Detection and Response to Illicit Trafficking’ or ‘Legislative and Regulatory Assistance’. All Mediterranean countries of low and medium concern participate in at least one of these projects. With the development of the new Instrument for Stability in 2007, the EU intensified its outreach and support activities with cooperative projects worth more than €8m. These projects included, for example, those aimed at combating the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive elements as well as the development of knowledge management systems on CBRN trafficking and on risk mitigation. It is important to note that the EU does not implement these projects directly in the southern Mediterranean but works through its Joint Research Centre or the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.

Based upon the Instrument for Stability projects, the EU intensified its outreach with the establishment of a network of so-called CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence with the aim of implementing ‘a coordinated strategy for CBRN risk mitigation at international, regional and national levels’ (European Union, 2012). Despite the network’s slow start and initial difficulties, it has slowly been taking shape. So far, five southern Mediterranean countries participate in this €21m Euros initiative,¹⁰ namely Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Jordan. The latter three will also host small regional secretariats of approximately four people plus visiting staff from EU institutions and member states. At the end of 2011, and in early 2012, the network also published its first calls for roughly 30 projects, of which 9 were at least partially focused on Mediterranean countries. These deal

with different CBRN risk mitigation mechanisms such as knowledge development and best practice transfer; capacity building for first responders in CBRN incidents; the development of an integrated national nuclear security system; and national response planning for CBRN events. Thus, similar to the BAFA programmes, the Centres of Excellence initiative is ultimately about the transfer of CBRN related rules and norms to partner countries. Once more, it is being carried out by an international organisation, in this case the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, in co-operation with the EU, which underlines the cooperative and international nature of these projects. At the same time, the initiative stresses the local ownership at the regional level of its activities, though it is still not entirely clear how this will work out in practice. Nonetheless, its main characteristic is a comprehensive, long-term perspective aimed at an ‘iterative process to build a culture of safety and security’ (European Commission, 2012: 3).

A Different Security Policy: Causes and Consequences

Given the EU’s strong normative basis and extensive normative practice in matters of non-proliferation in the southern Mediterranean, it is possible to conclude that the EU actually comes fairly close to the ideal type of a normative power. However, this research conclusion is at odds with the EU’s characterisation in other areas: first, in other areas closely related to non-proliferation, e.g. counter-terrorism, the existing literature suggests that the EU does not fulfil the established criteria of a normative power in the southern Mediterranean, as was pointed out during the conceptual analysis above. Second, by looking beyond the confines of the non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean, it is possible to see that in other geographic areas the EU still falls short of the ideal type of normative power. This difference has been most pronounced in the case of the EU Iran policy, wherein the pursuit of normative interests and the use of normative mechanisms have declined rapidly. Although originally the EU’s Iran policy may have been close to the ideal type of a normative power, it has increasingly turned towards coercive measures driven by more instrumental security interests and has, thus, departed from its role as a normative power during the nuclear negotiations of 2003 (see Kienzle, 2012). Consequently, the question is: what are the causes, and consequences, of this inconsistency in the EU’s characterisation as a normative power?

At first glance, the similarities between different non-proliferation policies and between these policies and other security policies are striking. First, the EU’s globally-oriented normative

agenda in the field of non-proliferation does not change across regions. Likewise, as in the case of non-proliferation, the EU's normative agendas in security areas like migration or counter-terrorism are based upon the corresponding international normative frameworks. Second, the formal prioritisation of non-proliferation hardly varies from the priority given to other security policies. That is, counter-terrorism or migration policies *per se* are not more important for the EU than non-proliferation policies. Third, the type or the intensity of the EU's relationship with the region or individual countries does not correlate with the variation in policy output. For example, EU non-proliferation policies towards Israel and Egypt, in many respects two very distinct countries, hardly varies, whereas policies towards Syria and Iran, two major proliferation concerns, have been very different. Yet, despite these similarities, the differences between non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean and Iran suggest that there should be special regional factors to explain these differences, whereas the variation between distinct EU security policy fields in the same geographic space hints at the peculiar conditions of non-proliferation policies inside the Union.

With regards to regional factors, the dominant issue has been the intractable Arab-Israeli conflict. In other security fields, this conflict has already been identified as a dominant factor in Euro-Mediterranean relations (Biscop, 2003: 188). In terms of non-proliferation, the main problem is that '...the parties of the EMP are in deep disagreement over virtually all the issues involved', as an Egyptian analyst pointed out several years ago (El-Sayed Selim, 2000: 134). Therefore, any relevant policy initiative has to circumvent the disagreements that exist carefully, especially when it comes to Egypt and Israel. This is first and foremost because of reasons of strategic balance: whereas Egypt claims that Israel's nuclear arsenal leads to a strategic disequilibrium in the region, Israel points to conventional Arab superiority. Second, whereas Arab states see Israeli nuclear disarmament as a pre-condition for peace, Israel maintains, with the support of the United States, that it cannot disarm without a comprehensive peace agreement. Due to the first disagreement, one-sided non-proliferation measures, i.e. which do not include Israeli disarmament, would essentially reinforce the strategic disequilibrium and are, thus, problematic for Egypt and other Arab states. Yet, due to the continuing conflict, disarmament measures in Israel are highly unlikely to succeed. Consequently, the most likely policy output consists of the measures that have been actually implemented, namely political dialogue and the invocation of international norms and confidence-building through outreach projects. In the case of Iran, the constraints of the Arab-Israeli conflict do not apply in the same way, because the development of Iran's nuclear programme is not only worrisome from an Israeli perspective but also from the perspective of

Iran's Arab rivals in the region, not least Egypt. Thus, the options to act in Iran have been much broader than in the southern Mediterranean. Likewise, counter-terrorism and migration policies are not affected in the same fundamental way by the Arab-Israeli conflict as the non-proliferation policies.

Within the EU, the most striking difference between the non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean and other policy areas is the role of what Bicchi (2007: 28-34) calls 'policy entrepreneurs'. In the case of Iran, the three major EU member states, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the so-called E3, took the initiative in 2003 and sent representatives for the first time to Iran to negotiate with the regime in Tehran. Although the EU was involved in the E3 format almost from the beginning through the inclusion of the High Representative in the negotiation team and consultations in the Council, it is the growing consensus amongst the small E3 grouping that has actively shaped the EU's Iran policy (see Kienzle, forthcoming). Likewise, it was specific EU member states that pushed the Union's Mediterranean agenda away from a more normative approach in security areas related to non-proliferation. Thus, the southern European member states were the driving force behind migration policies (Lutterbeck, 2006), whereas the EU's former North African colonial powers were the dominant actors in counter-terrorism policies (Wolff, 2009). With regards to non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean, no similarly influential actor has taken the initiative of implementing non-normative measures. This may be the result of disagreement, as in the case of the previously mentioned coercive elements in the non-proliferation clause in the Association Agreement with Syria. But it may also be explained simply by the absence of any actor that may try to force, for instance, the EU to engage in military involvement in the Syrian civil war. In practice, the EU's non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean have been driven by the non-proliferation units in the European Commission and Council and, since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the European External Action Service. Naturally, these institutions have focused their activity on the instruments that they know best. These have typically taken the form of political dialogue, non-proliferation clauses, and the financing of outreach programmes by multilateral organisations. In short, there has been no policy entrepreneur who wanted to push for non-proliferation measures distinct from such normative instruments.

In sum, what are the implications that arise from this analysis? First, it should be noted that the inconsistent normative and non-normative approaches to security issues in the southern Mediterranean and beyond tarnish the image of the EU as a normative power. As a result, it is very unlikely that the EU will be able to construct its new non-proliferation policies in the

region using the image of a normative power in a way that is fully accepted by southern Mediterranean partner countries. More importantly, however, this exposes the EU's non-proliferation policy in the southern Mediterranean to the criticism of being a weak policy. Policy-oriented analyses of the EU in particular tend to dismiss the Union's normative power approach as a fail-safe option. This option is regarded as effectual when those arguably more 'forceful' policies, like the Iranian one, are not feasible without having to overcome major political obstacles. Although this misses the point that advocates of normative power would like to make, NPE may still become a synonym for a weak power in the eyes of other actors if they see that the EU is a different, and in their eyes more forceful, actor in other areas. For countries like Syria or Israel the irrelevance of the EU in security matters is already well-documented (see Elleman et al., 2012; Harpaz & Shamis, 2010).

Conclusions

By systematically taking stock of the growing EU non-proliferation policies in the southern Mediterranean, it has been argued that the way that the Union implements its policies actually brings it very close to the criteria of an ideal type of a normative power. However, the broader picture of EU security policies reveals that there are substantial inconsistencies in the different issues relating to the southern Mediterranean as well as in the EU non-proliferation policies beyond that region. At first glance, this would seem to confirm earlier research results that have shown that the EU is only a normative power when it comes to certain issues (see Lerch & Schweltnus, 2006). However, it is not clear how narrow such an issue area can be in order to continue to recognise the EU as a normative power. In other words, is it useful to describe the EU as a normative power in one very specific area if in other, closely related areas it is clearly not? There are inherent dangers in viewing or constructing the EU as a normative power in a thematically and geographically limited space. In a nutshell, the inconsistencies in the EU's policies undermine the acceptance of the EU as a normative power by other actors and opens the door to criticism of the EU's normative approach as a mere default policy due to its perceived weakness.

In order to avoid these pitfalls of the NPE concept, the literature on how to identify a normative power, be it using the ideal type approach or Manner's tripartite methodology, should avoid turning the question into a mere tick-boxing exercise, wherein the EU simply fulfils, or fails to fulfil, certain criteria. There is rather a need to analyse the EU critically as a

normative power from a broader perspective, which would include different geographic spaces such as the eastern neighbourhood or south-east Asia. More specifically, research on the NPE concept requires more substantial comparative analyses, wherein the actual causes for the inconsistencies between both different issues, and different geographic areas, are examined in-depth. In this respect, the ultimate test case will be the long-term impact of the EU's normative approach, especially the evolving normative practices in targeted third countries. By dealing with these issues, the NPE literature could make significant contributions to the broader literature on the EU as an international actor.

From a policy point of view, there are essentially two ways forward: on the one hand, the EU can attempt to construct a more comprehensive image of itself as a normative power in the southern Mediterranean by making other security policies, as well as the non-proliferation policies in countries beyond the region, conform more closely to the ideal type of a normative power. At least some coherence appears to be necessary if the EU is to overcome the problems posed by the high degree of inconsistency in its security policies. Ultimately, this would lead to the EU *being* a normative power. On the other hand, the EU may wish to pursue a 'double strategy' (Pace, 2007: 671), wherein it complements its normative power approach to non-proliferation to the southern Mediterranean by exploiting other policy approaches, for example those being used in the still ongoing Syrian civil war. Given the urgency of the situation on the ground, a normative power approach aimed at the long-term diffusion of norms is currently not the most practical way to deal with Syria. But the EU could find alternative measures, e.g. military contingency planning in line with the US approach, in order to safeguard the Syrian chemical weapons arsenals, without giving up its normative power approach in the longer term. In this way, the EU would continue *to act as* a normative power in certain areas, e.g. policy outreach, but not limit its actions to these areas unnecessarily by *being* a normative power.

Notes

¹ In 2012, the original date for holding the conference, disagreement regarding the participation of Israel and Iran forced the Finnish hosts to postpone the conference to an undefined date in 2013. No agenda has been set so far.

² For the purposes of this article, I will refer to southern Mediterranean countries as: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

- ³ For an authoritative and regularly updated overview of WMD capabilities, see the country profiles on the Nuclear Threat Initiative website: <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/> (accessed 9 January 2013).
- ⁴ Dual-use items and technologies can be used indistinctively for civilian and military purposes.
- ⁵ This part synthesises the analysis of publicly available EU documents, in particular the six-monthly progress reports of the EU WMD Strategy, as well as interviews with European policy makers in June 2006, January 2009 and August 2012.
- ⁶ In the case of Israel, for example, there is no direct reference to a Middle East zone free of WMD.
- ⁷ EU member states refused to sign the negotiated agreement in 2004 in the context of the assassination of Rafik Hariri, the Lebanese Prime Minister, whereas at the end of 2009 Syria was not interested anymore in signing a revived version of the agreement.
- ⁸ It has been also decided to include a non-proliferation clause in any future agreement with Libya. However, due to the current political situation this is unlikely to happen any time soon.
- ⁹ All currency figures mentioned in this article refer to the whole budget of programmes or projects that involve southern Mediterranean countries, although they usually cover countries from other regions as well. At this point, it is not possible to provide more concrete figures, as the EU does not publish a breakdown of the budgets on a country-by-country basis.
- ¹⁰ Another €15m have been earmarked for the coming years.

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Table 1. Overview of EU activities by partner country, 2003-2012*

	Morocco	Tunisia	Algeria	Libya	Egypt	Israel	Syria	Lebanon	Jordan
Host of Centre of Excellence Secretariat	●		●						●
Target of Centre of Excellence project	●		●					●	
Target of outreach project	●	●							●
Selected state, Council Decision 2010/585/CFSP**	●		●					●	●
Beneficiary, Joint Action 2008/588/CFSP	●	●	●	●	●				
Recipient state, Joint Action 2008/314/CFSP	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Recipient state, Joint Action 2006/418/CFSP	●	●	●						
Recipient state, Joint Action 2005/574/CFSP	●	●	●		●			●	●
Non-proliferation provisions in agreements	●	●			●	●		●	●
Member of EpiSouth Network	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Member of EuroMed Police II and III	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Target of EU Demarches	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Formal political dialogue partner					●				
Informal political dialogue partner					●	●			

Notes: ● Yes

* The table excludes regional measures, in particular workshops and seminars. It also excludes Council Decision 2012/166/CFSP, as the corresponding list of selected states has not been published yet.

** The definitive list of recipient states has not been published yet.

Source: Own elaboration